

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5478

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK 1245

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUSAKA 1083

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ZA, RH, UK

SUBJ: FONMIN MWALE'S VIEWS ON OWEN INITIATIVE

SUMMARY: IN A LENGTHY CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND DCM PARIL 21, FONMIN MWALE EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM ABOUT A RHODESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE. ZAMBIA WOULD DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO SUPPORT SUCH A CONFERENCE ON THE BASIS OF HOW THE PATRIOTIC FRONT REACTS TO THE PROPOSAL. AT FIRST VIEW THE WHOLE IDEA LOOKED TO MWALE LIKE ANOTHER SMITH DELAYING EFFORT. ZAMBIA "WOULD NOT BE DRAGGED INTO A CONFERENCE IF IT LOOKED LIKE IT WAS GOING TO BE JUST ANOTHER ACADEMIC EXERCISE." THOSE WHO TALK ABOUT A CONFERENCE MUST REALIZE THAT THERE IS A WAR GOING ON IN RHODESIA, AND IT WILL BE THE PARTIES TO THE WAR WHO HAVE THE VOICE IN DECIDING THE FUTURE OF ZIMBABWE. AFRICANS ARE CONCERNED THAT SMITH WILL FIND YET AGWIN SOME WAY TO OUT MANEUVER THEM AT A CONFERENCE. HE PRESSED HARD ON WHAT THE U.S. ROLE WOULD BE IN INSURING THAT ANY AGREEMENTS ON RHODESIA WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED. WHEN ASKED IF THE EFFORT WAS WORTH A TRY, HE WAS EVASIVE. HE STATED THAT ZAMBIA WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCES IF THE NEGOTIATION OPTION

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FAILED. HE WAS EVEN AMBIGUOUS ON WHETHER ZAMBIA WOULD SUPPORT FREE ELECTIONS, REFERRING BACK TO THE ROLE OF THOSE WHO ARE DOING THE FIGHTING AND SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS DOUBTFUL FREE ELECTIONS WERE IN THE CARDS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IT CAME THROUGH CLEARLY FROM MWALE'S PRESENTATION THAT: (1) HE BELIEVES HIS GOVERNMENT HAD MADE NO COMMITMENT TO A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE; (2) GRZ SOLIDLY BACKS THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO THE

EXCLUSION OF ALL OTHER RHODESIAN NATIONALISTS; (3) GRZ WOULD SUPPORT A CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD ASSURE POWER FOR THE FRONT AT THE END OF NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE HAD COME IN TO DISCUSS HIS TRAVEL PLANS AND GET THE MINISTER'S THOUGHTS AFTER HIS TRAVELS. THE PRESIDENT'S U.S. SCHEDULE WAS REVIEWED. MWALE EXPRESSED HIS GREAT PLEASURE OVER FINAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE YALE DEGREE WHICH HE HAD WORKED SO HARD FOR OVER SO MANY YEARS. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED HIS HOPE TO HAVE A TALK WITH PRESIDENT KAUNDA BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE TO GET HIS THOUGHTS ON THE OWEN PROPOSALS AND OTHER SUBJECTS TO WHICH MWALE FULLY AGREED. THIS LED MWALE TO BEGIN A DISCUSSION OF THE OWEN PROPOSALS. HE SAID THE GRZ WOULD BE GUIDED BY THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S APPROACH. ZAMBIA WAS NOT A DIRECT PARTICIPANT IN THE RHODESIAN EQUATION. IT IS UP TO THE ZIMBABWEANS TO DECIDE THEIR POLITICAL FUTURE. AS FOR ZAMBIA, IT DID NOT WANT TO BE DRAGGED INTO A CONFERENCE WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE AN ACADEMIC EXERCISE. SMITH HAS BOUGHT TIME FOR YEARS BY PRETENDING INTEREST IN NEGOTIATIONS. WHAT IS THERE THIS TIME WHICH MAKES PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT HIS APPROACH IS ANY DIFFERENT? THE ONLY REAL PROBLEM IS TO GET SMITH TO TURN OVER POWER TO THE MAJORITY. THE BRITISH HAVE RESISTED DOING SO FOR YEARS OUT OF RACE LOYALTY TO THEIR KITH AND KIN.

2. THE AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT THIS TIME A CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE A NUMBER OF ADVANTAGES. DR. OWEN HAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRESENTING THE CONSTITUTION TO PARLIAMENT. HE COULD CONSULT WHOM HE WISHED BUT NO ONE--SPECIFICALLY NOT SMITH--HAD A VETO

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OVER HIS PROPOSAL. SECOND, THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE FOCUSING ON A CONSTITUTION AND NOT AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AS WAS THE CASE IN GENEVA, AND THE U.S. WOULD BE MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED. BY AVOIDING THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND BY HAVING THE U.S. CLOSELY INVOLVED, THE CHANCES FOR SUCCESS WOULD BE IMPROVED. MWALE SAID THE GRZ AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WANTED CLARIFICATION AS TO WHAT THE U.S. ROLE WOULD BE. HOW WOULD ITS PRESTIGE AND AUTHORITY INSURE THAT THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE ULTIMATED IN MAJORITY RULE? THE ONLY REAL QUESTION TO BE RESOLVED IS HOW TO GET RID OF SMITH. WHAT IS THE U.S. PREPARED TO DO IN THIS REGARD?

3. AS FOR THE CONFERENCE ITSELF, MWALZ ASKED A SERIES OF QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IT WOULD INVOLVE. WHO WOULD PARTICIPATE? THE AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT OWEN HAD MADE CLEAR THAT HE BELIEVES ALL ELEMENTS CONCERNED WITH RHODESIA'S FUTURE SHOULD HAVE A SAY. THIS MEANT THAT ALL THOSE REPRESENTED AT GENEVA WOULD BE CONSULTED. WHAT WOULD SMITH'S STATUS BE AT A CONFERENCE? AFTER ALL, MWALE SAID, HE IS LEGALLY A REBEL AND RECOGNIZED

AS SUCH BY THE UK AND THE WORLD COMMUNITY. AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT OWEN WOULD CONSULT FURTHER BEFORE INVITATION WENT TO ANY POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS. MWALE ASKED IF SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE INVITED? AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NOT ENVISAGED. DOES THE DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE ESTABLISHED IN GENEVA STILL STAND? AMBASSADOR REPLIED OWEN HAD SIAD 1978. FINALLY, MWALE AGAIN PRESSED ON HOW ANY AGREEMENT WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED; WHO WOULD ENSURE THAT SMITH CARRIED OUT ANY AGREEMENT ARRIVED AT? WOULD THE U.S. BE INVOLVED; IF SO, IN WHAT WAY? AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT THAT IF ALL PARTIES AGREED TO A CONSTITUTION, THERE WOULD BE LESS NEED FOR ENFORCEMENT MEASURES AND RHODESIA AND ALL COLORS WOULD BE MORE WILLING TO SUPPORT A SETTLEMENT WHEN THEY KNEW WHAT THE RULES OF THE GAME WOULD BE. THE CONSTITUTION WOULD SERVE TO DAMPEN DOWN THE TYPE OF DISTRUST WHICH WOULD DICTATE THE NEED FOR ENFORCEMENT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUSAKA 1083

4. MWALE AGREED WHEN THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THE ALTERNATIVE TO A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WAS WIDESCALE BLOODSHED IN RHODESIA WHICH COULD NOT HELP BUT INFLUENCE THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT A CONFERENCE MIGHT BE WORTH THE EFFORT. HOWEVER, HE REPEATED, ZAMBIA WAS NOT GOING TO BE DRAGGED INTO A CONFERENCE WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE A COVER FOR DELAYING ZIMBABWEAN INDEPENDENCE. SMITH IS A PAST MASTER AT DELAYING TACTICS. WHO IS TO SAY THAT HE IS INCAPABLE OF OUT MANEUVERING THE AFRICANS ONCE AGAIN AT YET ANOTHER EFFORT AT NEGOTIATIONS. MWALE EMPHASIZED THAT BEFORE SAYING WHETHER OR NOT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD SUPPORT A CONFERENCE, HE WOULD NEED TO KNOW IN DETAIL EXACTLY WHAT THE CONFERENCE WAS DESIGNED

TO ACHIEVE AND HOW ANY RESULTS WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED.

5. ASKED IF HE BELIEVED ZAMBIA AND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD PARTICIPATE IN A PROCESS WHICH LED THROUGH DRAWING UP A CONSTITUTION WHICH WAS ENACTED BY PARLIAMENT TO FREE ELECTIONS AND MAJORITY RULE, MWALE RECALLED THAT THERE IS A WAR GOING ON IN RHODESIA. THOSE WHO WERE FIGHTING THE WAR COULD NOT BE EXCLUDED FROM THE FINAL SETTLEMENT. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD PROBABLY BE WILLING TO ACCEPT THE RESULTS OF ELECTION, BUT
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DID ANYONE IMAGINE THAT WITH SMITH INVOLVED FREE ELECTIONS COULD EVER TAKE PLACE? THE ONLY WAY TO REALLY RESOLVE THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM IS TO GET RID OF SMITH. (HE SAID KISSINGER HAD PROMISED HIM HE WOULD TAKE CARE OF THIS.)
THE AMBASSADOR SAID SOMETHING WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT WHICH WOULD TAKE HIS PLACE. MWALE SAID, "WE HAVE SOMETHING TO REPLACE SMITH WITH--THE PATRIOTIC FRONT." AND HE REPEATED, IF THE U.S. WANTS TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION, IT CAN GET RID OF SMITH.

6. AS FOR FRONTLINE'S RELATIONS WITH THE PF, THE FRONTLINE IS FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED FOR UNITY ONCE ZIMBABWE IS FREE, ESPECIALLY MILITARY UNITY. THEREFORE, THE FRONTLINE IS LEANING HARD ON THE FRONT TO ASSURE UNITY.

COMMENT: CLEARLY MWALE, AND WE BELIEVE HE SPEAKS FOR KAUNDA, REGARDS A RHODESIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE WITH GRAVE RESERVATIONS. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT MWALE IS INCLINED AT TIMES TO GET CARRIED AWAY AND TAKE EXTREME POSITIONS THAT LACK THE NUANCES THE STATE HOUSE BRINGS TO ISSUES OF GRZ POLICY. FURTHERMORE, HE WAS NOT PRESENT DURING THE OWEN VISIT THOUGH HE HAS HAD A NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES TO DISCUSS IT WITH PRESIDENT KAUNDA. HIS EXPOSITION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WITH THIS IN MIND. GRZ RESERVATIONS ABOUT A CONFERENCE WE BELIEVE ARISE FROM A GENUINE FEAR THAT A CONFERENCE WILL BE USED BY SMITH TO DELAY THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA. HE MADE CLEAR THAT HE BELIEVES HIS GOVERNMENT HAS MADE NO COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT A CONFERENCE AND THAT BEFORE DOING SO, THE GRZ WOULD HAVE TO KNOW IN DETAIL THE RULES OF THE CONFERENCE AND HOW ANY RESULTS WOULD BE ENFORCED. IT ALSO WAS EVIDENT THAT MWALE WOULD RESIST ANY SETTLEMENT THAT EXCLUDED THE PATRIOTIC FRONT FROM THE FRUITS OF POWER IN AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. WE TAKE SERIOUSLY THE POSITION HE EXPRESSED AND BELIEVE THAT CONSIDERABLE CONVINCING WILL HAVE TO BE DONE TO REASSURE KAUNDA THAT NEW NEGOTIATIONS ARE LIKELY TO BE FRUITFUL. GIVEN KAUNDA'S COMMITMENT TO NKOMO WE SUSPECT THAT
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CONVINCING HIM OF THE VALIDITY OF ANY CONFERENCE WHICH DOES
NOT GUARANTEE NKOMO A PROMINENT ROLE IN AN INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE
WILL BE A MOST DIFFICULT TASK.
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